

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed on June 18, 2003, claims 1-2 and 8-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,005,498) ("Yang") in view of Matsushita (JP Application No. Hei 7 (1995)-129572 A) ("Matsushita") and Miller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,896,321) ("Miller"); claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang and Matsushita in view of Canon (JP Application No. Hei 9 (1997)-6771 A) ("Canon"); and claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang in view of Matsushita, Miller, Bishop (U.S. Patent No. 5,829,023) ("Bishop"), Hitachi (JPO Publication No. Sho 61-32186) ("Hitachi"), and Just Syst (JPO Publication No. Hei 9-179859) ("Just Syst"). The foregoing rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1-2, 5, and 7-9 are pending in the subject application, of which claims 1, 8, and 9 are independent claims.

Entry of Amendment After Final Rejection:

The Applicant respectfully asserts that the amendments presented herein require only a cursory review by the examiner, and respectfully requests that the examiner enter such amendments.

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1, 2, 8, and 9 are amended herein. Claims 1, 8, and 9 are amended to recite "acquiring a situation of a character inputting device that has been started or an activated program, into which a character string is input;" claim 1 is further amended to recite "storing a character string that has been affirmed with the affirmation processing part in the situation-optimized dictionary designated by the situation control part under a condition that the character string is associated with a situation acquired with the input situation acquiring part;" claims 8 and 9 are further amended to recite "storing an affirmed character string in the situation-optimized dictionary under a condition that the character string is associated with an acquired situation;" and claim 2 is amended to recite "information relating to an application program to which an output candidate character string is given" and to correct a typographical error. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter.

Support for the claim amendments may be found in the Specification at page 10, lines 4-24 and page 14, lines 3-10.

Rejections of the Claims:

Miller discusses a text completion system that automatically displays a list of completion suggestions for a partial data entry in response to a pause in receipt of the data entry (Miller, Abstract). A text completion system predicts and suggests complete data entries based on partial data entries, allowing a user to type in a partial data entry and then accept a predicted text completion with a single keystroke, thus avoiding the keystrokes that would have been required to type the complete data entry (Miller, col. 2, lines 9-14). Although Miller discusses “reduced-size” keyboards (Miller, col. 4, line 18), such keyboards are still complete keyboards, just in a smaller total size (Miller, col. 1, lines 13-15 and 41-47). Therefore, Miller discusses a system where there still exists a single key for every character.

Yang discusses a method and apparatus for entry of characters on a reduced keypad using phonetic symbols (Yang, col. 2, lines 25-28 and 41). Yang uses priority rules to rearrange the order of presentation of multiple alphabet symbols that are associated with a single key on the keypad (Yang, col. 6, lines 27-33). In contrast to Miller, Yang discusses “reduced” keypads, where “multiple alphabet symbols are associated with a single key” (Yang, col. 2, lines 26-28; Figs. 3 and 5).

Lack Of Motivation To Combine The References:

Although the examiner asserts that it would have been “obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to update the contents of the situation-optimized dictionary dynamically,” (Office Action, item 5, page 4), the Examiner does not even set forth the motivation to combine Yang and Miller.

MPEP § 706.02(j) sets forth the contents of a rejection under § 103: “To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must

both be found in the prior art and not based on applicant's disclosure" (emphasis in original).

Therefore, the examiner has failed to sufficiently present a *prima facie* case of obviousness, because he did not assert the motivation for someone skilled in the art to combine Yang and Miller. In addition, such motivation does not exist because someone skilled in the art would not have been motivated to combine the reduced keypad of Yang with the reduced-size keyboard of Miller. The two different character entry devices serve entirely different purposes – Yang being to reduce the total number of keys; Miller being to maintain a full set of keys, but to reduce the overall size. Someone of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine such uncombinable ideas.

Differences Between The Claimed Invention And The Cited References:

Yang relates to a character string inputting device used in a cellular telephone. The examiner states that Yang teaches the situation acquiring of the claimed invention as a menu key for allowing a user to select a "pinyin entry" option (Yang, col. 3, lines 15-17). However, the menu key in Yang merely allows a user to select a character input mode.

In contrast, the situation acquiring in the present invention is used for acquiring an input situation as described on page 10, lines 4-24 of the Specification, which is different from the menu key of Yang for allowing a user to select a character input mode. Independent claims 1, 8, and 9 (as amended herein) recite "acquiring a situation of a character inputting device that has been started or an activated program, into which a character string is input." In addition, independent claim 1 (as amended herein) recites "an affirmed character string storing part for storing a character string that has been affirmed with the affirmation processing part in the situation–optimized dictionary designated by the situation control part under a condition that the character string is associated with a situation acquired with the input situation acquiring part," and independent claims 8 and 9 (as amended herein) recite "storing an affirmed character string in the situation–optimized dictionary under a condition that the character string is associated with an acquired situation." Yang does not disclose or suggest the same.

The examiner states that the dictionary selection part of Matsushita corresponds to the situation control part of the present invention for affirming a dictionary used for generating a candidate character string (Office Action, p. 3). However, the dictionary selection part of Matsushita merely selects the priority order of reference of a plurality of dictionaries in

accordance with the using times and the arranged order (Matsushita, p. 2, lines 8-11 of translation), and does not affirm a dictionary used for generating a candidate character string or a part of such dictionary in accordance with a situation and designate it as a situation-optimized dictionary, as further claimed in independent claims 1, 8, and 9 (as amended herein).

Clearly, independent claims 1, 8, and 9 of the subject application (as amended herein) are patentably distinguishable over the cited references. In addition, dependent claims 2, 5, and 7 are allowable based in part on their dependency from one of allowable claims 1, 8, and 9.

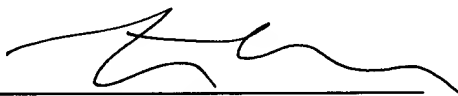
Withdrawal of the foregoing rejections is respectfully requested.

There being no further objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, which action is courteously requested. Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters. If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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